

Message Text

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SUBJECT: FLORENCE'S CARDINAL CRITICIZES COMPROMISES WITH
MARXIST ATHEISM

1. FLORENCE CARDINAL FLORIT, IN A SERMON DELIVERED NOVEMBER 23 ON THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF A FRANCISCAN FEAST MADE ONE OF HIS RARE POLITICAL PRONOUNCEMENTS. IN SPEAKING OF THE CHARACTER OF ST. FRANCIS, HE MADE REFERENCE TO HIS PERIOD COMPARING IT WITH TODAY'S WHERE 'THESE YEARS HAVE SEEN A PROLIFERATION, EVEN IN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, OF AN INTELLECTUALISM THAT WISHES TO REDUCE TO MARXIST AND RATIONAL TERMS THE CONCEPT OF SALVATION, THE AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF LIBERATION'.

2. THE CARDINAL CONTINUED THAT IT WAS 'UNFORTUNATE THAT SUPERFICIAL THEOLOGIES WISHED TO JUSTIFY IMPOSSIBLE COMPROMISES WITH ATHEISM WHEN IT WAS KNOWN THAT THERE DOESN'T EXIST ANY IDEOLOGY MORE WIDESPREAD, RADICAL AND INTOLERANT THAN ATHEISM'. SPEAKING LATER OF MARXISM, HE STATED 'COLLABORATION, EVEN ON CONCRETE PROJECTS ON THE PART OF THE BELIEVER (WITH MARXISTS)
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CANNOT BE BUT PROVISIONAL, AMBIGUOUS AND IN THE END INCON-

CLUSIVE AND DANGEROUS'. HE CONCLUDED 'GOD GRANT WE DON'T ONE DAY BECOME SLAVES -- CRYING BITTERLY BECAUSE OF OUR PRIVATE AND PUBLIC MISTAKES'.

3. COMMENT. THE CARDINAL'S SERMON WAS SUMMARIZED WITHOUT COMMENT IN 'LA NAZIONE' AS THE LEAD STORY IN THE 'NEWS OF FLORENCE' SECTION OF THE PAPER. THE COMMUNIST CONTROLLED 'PAESE SERA' CARRIED A SHORT ARTICLE ON PAGE 2 THE NEXT DAY LINKING FLORIT'S STATEMENT WITH THOSE OF CARDINAL POLETTI (VICAR OF ROME) AND OTHER PRELATES BUT CALLING FLORIT'S STATEMENT MORE 'CLUMSY'. THE FACT THAT THE CARDINAL, WHO HAS SHOWN LITTLE INTEREST BEFORE IN PRIVATE OR IN PUBLIC IN POLITICS, SHOULD NOW MAKE SUCH AN ATTACK, ALBEIT INDIRECT, MAY BE AN INDICATION THAT THE CHURCH IN TUSCANY WILL NOT SIT QUIETLY ON THE SIDELINES, AS IT HAS IN THE RECENT PAST, WHILE THE MARXIST PARTIES ADVANCE THEIR ELECTORAL PERCENTAGES.
GORDON

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